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*"...you won't want to miss this 112 page book. Covers many of the behind-the-scenes operations — stations, coach yards, and maintenance shops — along with a healthy helping of trains and equipment. Up-to-date . . . unique . . . an enjoyable addition to the collection of anyone interested in Amtrak's America."*
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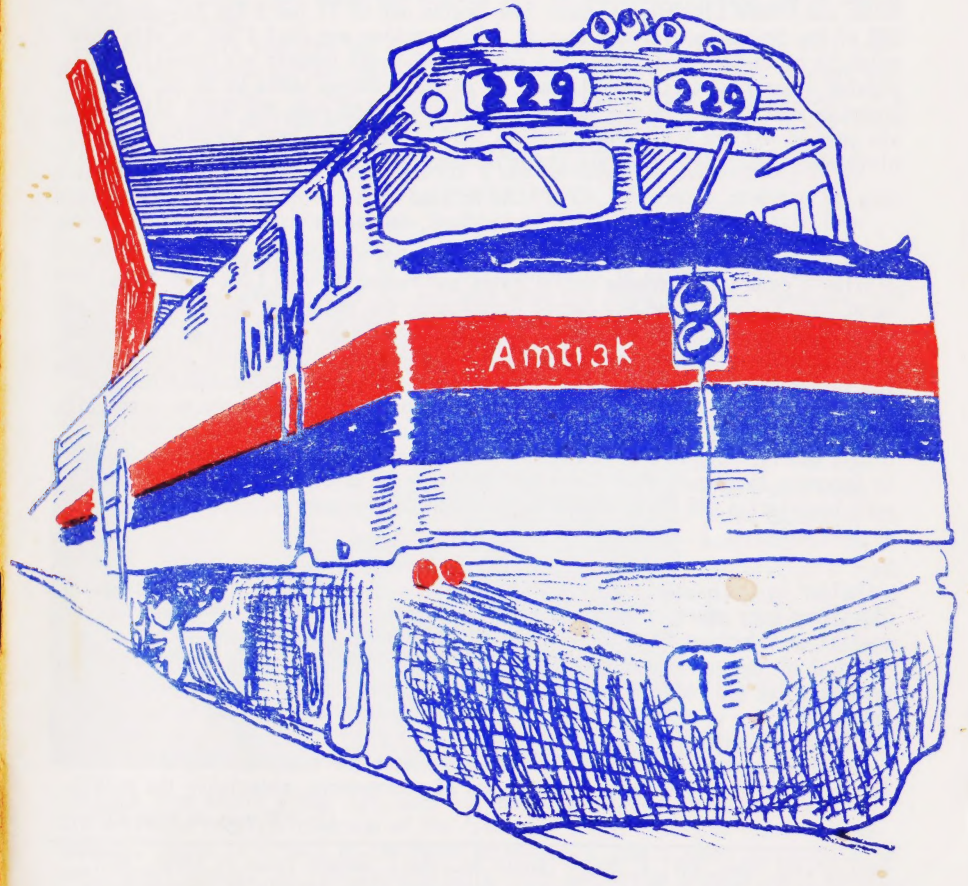
# RAIL TRAVEL NEWS


VOL. 7 NO. 8
SECOND ISSUE OF
APRIL 1977
#152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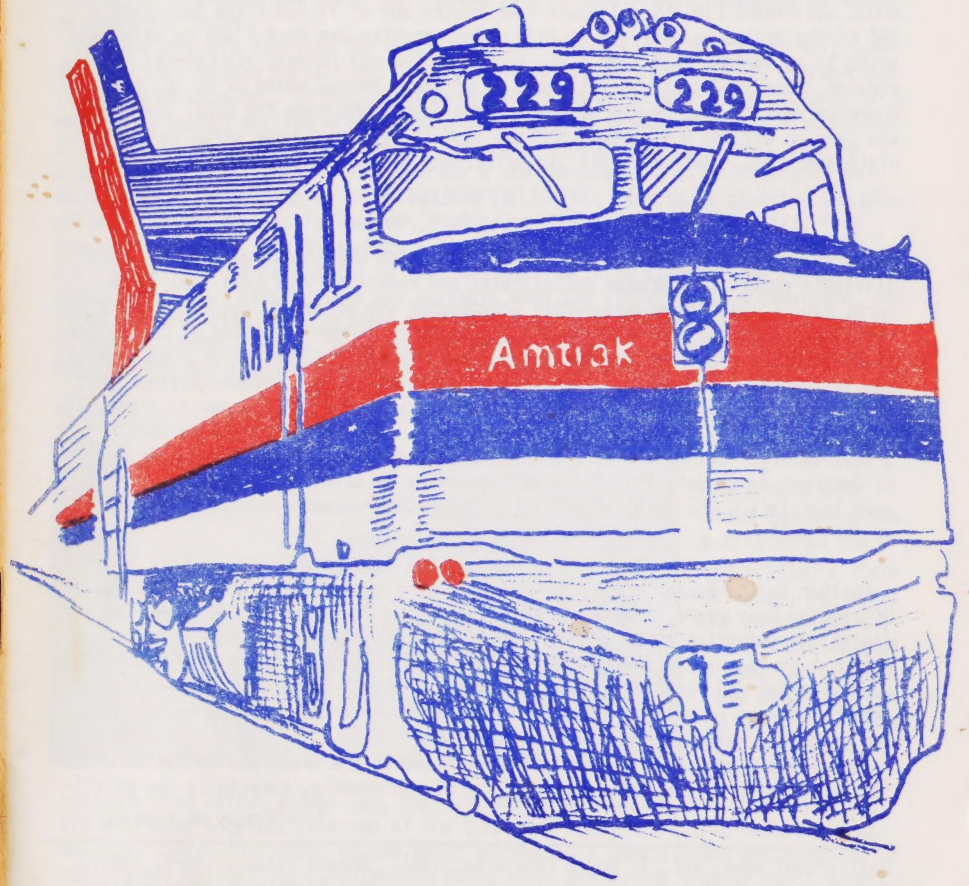


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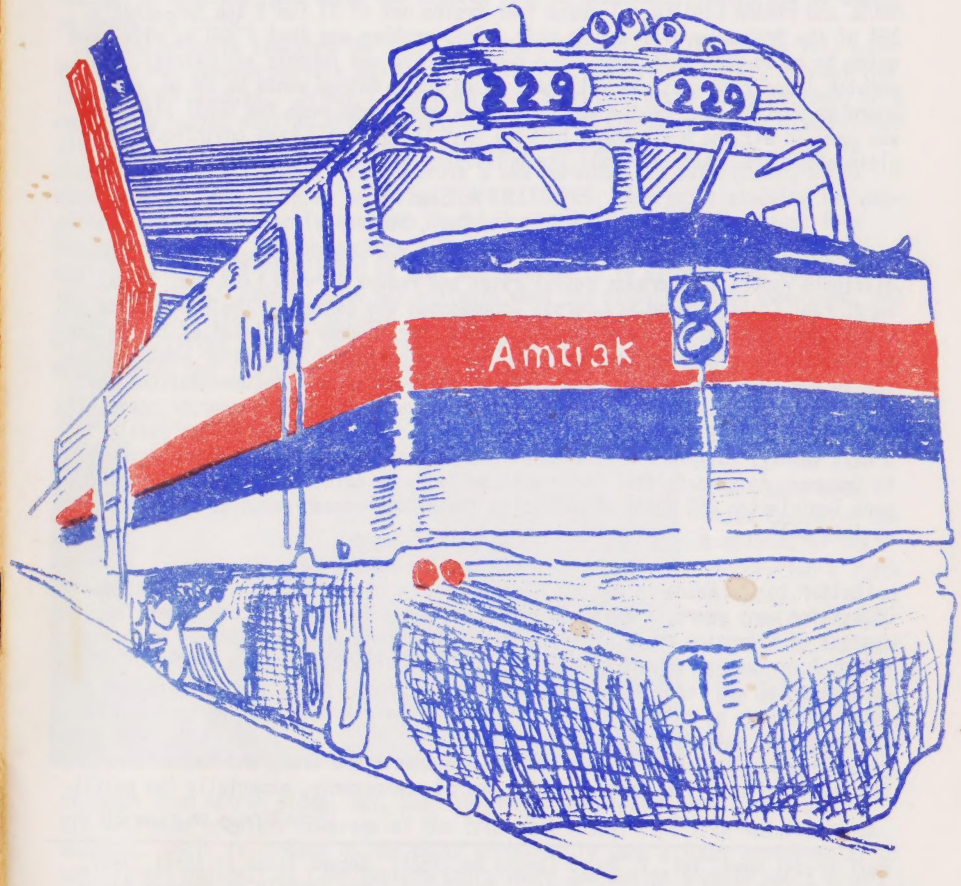



## SIX YEARS OF AMTRAK

ON THE COVER: Amtrak F40 engine no. 229 illustrates the latest in standard Amtrak equipment and sets the 6th Anniversary theme of this issue. From Message Media photo.

## LETTERS

You got to be kidding--Amtrak's new schedules were made to allow connections to be made? You make me laugh--all they do is to make sure that connections won't be met. No. 8 will arrive Chicago at 5:15pm. No. 8 is not only a west-east train, but is also a north-south train from Minneapolis to Chicago. Now then, let us see all those connections #8 is scheduled to make:

No. 5 for Denver etc. will have left at 4pm*
No. 15 for Dallas will have left at 4:30pm*
No. 48 for Cleveland will have left at 2:30pm
No. 354 for Detroit will have left at 4:30pm*
No. 364 for Port Huron will have left at 3:25pm*
No. 50 for Cincinnati will have left at 10:15am
No. 371 for Dubuque will have left at 5:15pm*

*means trains were scheduled to make connection during winter and would have except for bad track and SDP40F problem.

My, oh my! We will be able to ride the BROADWAY, SOUTHWEST LIMITED and STATE HOUSE and PANAMA LIMITED. I guess four trains out of 11 isn't too bad--that's 36% of the trains we will get to ride. Only problem was that I and my wife were going to go to Reno this year. Our second choice was Toronto via Detroit. Well, scratch those two--guess we will have to go where Amtrak wants us to go, not where we want to go. By the way, all those people who rode the COAST STARLIGHT who came in off the NORTH COAST HI (see last issue) won't have anything to complain about now. Amtrak in all its brilliance has killed that connection too.

H. M. Swan
St. Paul, Minnesota

The two members of the Postal Service Commission who voted against that Commission's report to increase postal rates and reduce service (see last issue) were: Paul Krebs, former New Jersey Congressman who served on the Post Office and Civil Service Committee; and James H. Rademacher, former President of the National Association of Letter Carriers, who has always fought for better postal service to the American public. Also, one of the Commission's recommendations that would impair RTN's ability to provide fresh news of the rail passenger scene (its major function) is the proposal to reduce mail deliveries from 6 days weekly to 5 days weekly. Simply RTN will be delivered later. A bill has been introduced in Congress to mandate that 6-day mail delivery be maintained. Readers favoring such legislation (HR 6520) should write their Congressman/woman to vote favorably on this bill.

C. Allen Breen
Union, New Jersey

(Letter to the Reader's Digest:) Having been a reader and subscriber to Reader's Digest for many years, I have had very few if any occasions to doubt the factual content or intention of a particular article. In other words, I have taken your material at face value and governed my opinions accordingly as a result of your good material and reputation. However, in your April issue which I received only yesterday, an article titled "Time to Get Amtrak on Track" by Earl and Miriam Selby has raised my ire.

I will admit that many of the Selbys' statements are true, and Amtrak's record for the first nearly 6 years has been one of controversy, especially the politi-

(continued on page 23)

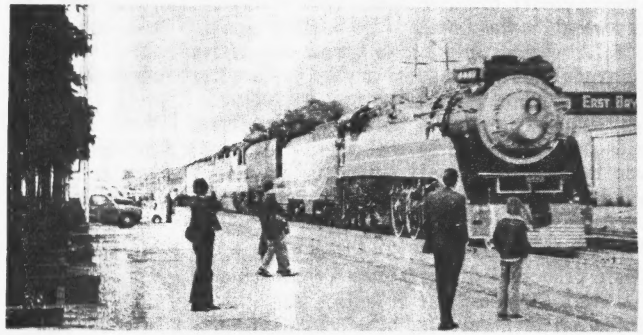
Rail Travel News, Vol. 7, No. 8 (Whole No. 152). Second Issue of April, 1977.
Copyright © 1977 by Message Media.
Published twice monthly by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $9.00 per year; single copy 40¢.
STAFF: Editor: James Russell. Editor-at-Large: Paul Rayton. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Los Angeles; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston. Mailing date this issue: May 9, 1977.

## RILEY RESCHEDULED; MOUNTAINEER TO END RUNS

Amtrak announced on Apr 27 a new schedule for the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, effective May 1. The change makes it an overnight train between Washington and Charleston WV and a daytime train between Charleston and Chicago. Amtrak said the train would continue on its present route thru Indiana, serving Muncie, Marion and Peru--for at least 2 years, with the route to be reviewed in Oct 1978. The route thru Muncie is considered a detour because of poor track between Cincinnati, Indianapolis & Chicago. The RILEY will now lv Washington at 9:35pm, ar Charleston 6:22am, ar Cincinnati 10:56am, ar Chicago 5:55pm. Eastbound, lv Chicago 10:15am, ar Cincinnati 6:42pm, ar Charleston 11:31pm, ar Washington 8:35am. A new stop is added at Manassas VA, 10:04pm westbd, 7:24am eastbd, at the Southern Rwy station, 9500 West St. Only one stop will be made in Charlottesville--at the Main St. Station--and the SR Station stop discontinued. The SOUTHERN CRESCENT uses the SR Station. Amtrak said the alteration is an effort to increase ridership by serving the overnight DC-Charleston market; by serving as a daytime train between W. Virginia points & Cincinnati; and by operating on a daytime pattern Cincinnati-Chicago. Amtrak will use SR track & station in Manassas, and while the station will be unmanned, tickets can be bought on board the train.

The new schedule isolates the train from the MOUNTAINEER. That train will continue to run between Norfolk and Tri-State Station (Catlettsburg) KY, without the thru cars to Chicago. On May 3 Transportation Secretary Brock Adams decided, in a reportedly heated meeting with Amtrak, that the MOUNTAINEER should be discontinued after Jun 2, its experimental period being up. Amtrak announced May 3 that in place of the MOUNTAINEER it will operate a new service from Catlettsburg KY to Washington DC, the train to be called the HILLTOPPER. Amtrak is studying two possible routes on the section between Roanoke and Washington: (1) northeast from Roanoke on Chessie thru Waynesboro & Charlottesville VA to Washington; and (2) east to Lynchburg & Petersburg on N&W, and then north to Richmond and Washington on SCL and RF&P. Amtrak could not estimate when the study would be completed, and there may be a time lapse between discontinuance of the MOUNTAINEER and inaugural of the HILLTOPPER. Adams found that an average of only 35 riders daily used the MOUNTAINEER, and therefore it could not be justified economically.

## AMTRAK STEAM EXCURSION COMPLETED



Amtrak's 4449 Steam Excursion was completed on the corporation's sixth birthday, May 1, as the engine and its rail fan-packed cars steamed into Portland OR (in the photo the train is passing thru Berkeley on Apr 29, with assistance from Amtrak diesel 527, past the former SP station, now a restaurant). RTN will have complete coverage of the trip next issue. The trip had its tense moments. South of Jackson MS the train accidentally took a 10mph crossover at 40 mph without damage. At Lake Pontchartrain there was engine trouble and a diesel had to assist. At Lake Charles another problem developed which required a diesel assist. Beyond Houston a diesel was permanently in the consist in case of trouble. Observers called the train a huge public relations success. Besides many riders, thousands of people turned out to view the train along the way.

# Urban-Suburban Transit

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMMUTE line in San Francisco is much easier to reach from Eastbay and other points since the opening of BART's Embarcadero Station in S.F. A block from BART, Muni's #32 Embarcadero bus, running each 15mins, makes a quick trip to the new SP depot at 4th and Townsend.

WHAT DID CARTER'S hand-written note to Secretary Brock Adams (see 2nd Mar RTN) really mean? According to a Railway Age report (Apr 11) Adams interpreted the memo as nothing really new--that Carter is simply concerned with costs. Adams indicated that it does not change his committal to mass transit, but "...that doesn't mean you've got to tunnel every city and run subway cars. You can go to light rail. You can go to completely dedicated bus express lanes. You can go in various areas to various types of people movers. But we have to be very careful in these analyses that we don't overbuild them."

THE TOTAL COST to the individual of auto ownership is higher than most people believe. Columnist Sylvia Porter recently costed out the ownership of a standard size $5000 American car as $18,000 if you keep it ten years.

SOUTH SHORE LINE funding progress is being made. On Apr 26 the Indiana House approved a bill allowing the state to spend up to $3.6 million on new cars for the oppressed interurban line. Operational subsidy money still must be found.

BOMBARDIER-MLW COMPANY of Canada is attempting to interest Indiana officials in buying the Highliner commuter cars it manufactures for placement on the South Shore Line. The company is building 36 such cars for ICG commuter service out of Chicago, and the regional agency may consider purchase of 15 more.

SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL has approved plans for expanding the city's electric trolley coach system. Most proposals were adopted except one for rewiring the No. 11 Madison Park route. Ferry service to and from downtown Seattle was disrupted in late April when the 382-ft ferry Hyak failed to reverse, crashing into the Pier 52 terminal at high speed. Passenger boarding ramps were knocked into the water, requiring all passengers to board and leave ferries from the auto deck.

POTOMAC TRANSPORT COMPANY has been hired by Atlantic City NJ to obtain hydrofoils for carrying gamblers from New York to Atlantic City starting in spring of 1978. In addition, Amtrak and ConRail have been approached for train service.

AMTRAK COULD TAKE over ConRail commuter operations in the East. Observers say that ConRail commuter operation has become a continuing question mark, and that complaints of worsening service under CR have become commonplace. Highly-placed sources indicate that transit authorities generally believe that Amtrak would do a better job, evidenced from recent NE Corridor operation.

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY ADAMS has said that he will review all money commitments made by former Sec'y Coleman in the last days of his job. Projects to be reviewed would include the Chicago Transit Authority's proposed extension to O'Hare Airport. However, Railway Age reports that Chicago officials believe the UMTA funds are safe from possible deletion.

"TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT: State of the Art" is a new publication of the DOT designed to help make more efficient use of existing highways, streets and transit systems without large capital investments. The $2.80 book can be obtained from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. GPO, Washington DC 20402. Ask for Stock No. 050-014-00012-6.

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION has begun a rulemaking study to improve intermodal travel of rail-bus passengers. The ICC will look at the laws and regulations that control or inhibit such intermodal movements.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY has filed a complaint against Santa Fe Railway, asking it to run the "Baxter Ward" commuter train between L.A. and San Diego. The complaint, filed with the state Public Utilities Commission, is Case 10296. Cars for the EL CAMINO train have been refurbished and made ready, but not yet run.



BOSTON AND MAINE and the MBTA have published new Boston-area commuter timetables effective May 1. In addition a pamphlet for South Side commuters announces "good news": "We are undertaking a major program to make commuting a whole lot better for you. Nine stations on the Franklin Branch will undergo major rebuilding with expanded parking, and 20 more stations on the other lines will have new signs and lighting and repairs to platforms and parking lots. Five new locomotives and 25 new coaches are being purchased, and 17 locomotives and 8 rail cars will be rebuilt..." The system now offers unlimited ride monthly tickets to all Boston commuter rail patrons. Such a pass will have a 25¢ Rapid Transit pass printed on its reverse, permitting unlimited rides on central area Red, Orange, Green and Blue line services.

FIXED GUIDEWAY SYSTEM for transit in Honolulu received wide support at public hearings in early April. Hearings were held on whether an environmental impact study of such a system should be undertaken. A 14-mile route would run from Aloha Stadium to Kahala Mall. Other routes are also being considered, including one between Honolulu International Airport and the University of Hawaii.

THE LRV STREETCARS in Boston were withdrawn from service on Apr 16 after tests showed that their trucks turn too stiffly and require 3 times as much force to turn as do the trucks on PCC cars. Thirty LRVs have been accepted, and all are now out of service pending decision on what to do about the trucks. There have been 30 LRV derailments since they went into service, and the stiff truck problem is said to be the culprit.

UMTA HAS INVITED local communities to submit letters of interest with respect to participating in experiments with transit service level and fare policies. Local responses are due May 31 in UMTA's Office of Service and Methods Demonstrations, which will handle the experiments. The six demonstration concepts are: (1) systemwide fare abolition with controlled service variations; (2) systemwide fare reduction or abolition during off-peak hours; (3) central area fare elimination; (4) fare incentives as a promotional measure; (5) experiments with various controlled service improvements; and (6) UMTA-sponsored independent evaluation of locally-initiated projects.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION'S advisory committee PENTAP recommended late in April that the MTC should make bulk purchases of SP commute line tickets to be sold to commuters at lower prices, as a first step in subsidizing the rail commuter line. The subsidy would offset fare increases expected to be enacted soon by the PUC for the San Francisco peninsula commute line. PENTAP also recommended going ahead with further plans to allow public funding of the service.

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## QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"The general thrust of airline promotion is that flights are convenient, comfortable, even luxurious. They do not emphasize that once inside an airplane the passengers are in an emergency situation from the outset."

--Psychologist Daniel Johnson discussing Mar 27 Canary Island disaster, in UPI news release.

## SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Powered by bulk fuel oil and equipped with a snack bar and parlor car, the (4449) train is scheduled to travel about 30 miles a day and refuel while its passengers disembark each night."

--Houston Chronicle, Apr 10.

(And take a taxi back home.)

# Rail Canada

CANADIAN NATIONAL INTRODUCED in April a Canrailpass for Canadians. The money-saving rail pass comes in 3 varieties: Canada-wide; for Winnipeg and East; and for Winnipeg and West. Rates are lower starting Sept 16 ($275 for Canada-wide) and higher during the summer season Jun 16-Sep 15 ($325 Canda-wide). The pass offers 30 days unlimited coach travel on any Via CN train and most CN long distance buses. There are no restrictions on days of usage, but reservations are required on some trains. The pass can be upgraded to sleeper, club car or Dayniter service at extra charge. The lowest-priced pass is Winnipeg-West in off-season: $125.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RDC runs between Edmonton and Grand Centre terminated with final operation on Apr 21. The Edmonton-North Battleford RDC run has also been given permission for discontinuance by the Canadian Transport Commission.

CP RAIL'S TWO daily RDC's between Calgary and South Edmonton have added a flag stop at Didsbury, effective Apr 24. A reduced-fare roundtrip price of $17.40 was introduced on the route on Apr 4.

CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION is expected to issue its preferred plan for transcontinental service this May. On Carl Fowler's transcon trip reported on last issue, discussion of VIA Rail was rampant, if speculative, everywhere. The only consistent rumours heard were these: (1) East of Winnipeg CPR crews believed that the two transcon services would largely survive, with CPR getting all Montreal business and CN all traffic from Toronto. (2) West of Winnipeg CPR expected to lose its routes east of Winnipeg, but become the primary carrier west of there, with stepped-up Calgary-Edmonton service, and with CN keeping Edmonton-Prince Rupert and Winnipeg-Churchill main routes, plus most of its RDC locals. This scheme was also echoed, with obvious distress, by CN crews in Vancouver. A single 17-car transcon train would run CN to Winnipeg, then CPR west of there, using basically the CANADIAN's car pool, until new equipment could be delivered. This scheme, if enacted, has the obvious defect of putting Jasper, Edmonton and Saskatoon all on inconvenient branch-line schedules.

TWO CITIZEN GROUPS, Transport 2000 and the Saskatchewan Rail Committee, have asked the Canadian Transport Commission to reconsider its decision to drop the CN Edmonton-North Battleford trains effective May 24. The request said that new information, including artificially inflated loss figures, inadquacy of public transport in the area, and the energy crisis, had not been considered by the Commission.

PROVINCIAL FUNDING APPROVAL came last month for construction of a station at a new Toronto GO Train stop to be named Oakville West and located adjacent to Third Line. The station is expected to open early in July, allowing Bronte to be closed.

NEW SUBWAY CARS, the first 4 of 14 being built in Germany, arrived in Edmonton Apr 11 after an ocean voyage to Vancouver, where they were loaded on CP Rail flat cars. German crews are helping set up operation of the DuWag cars.

CANADIAN NATIONAL MADE its first profit in 20 years last year, it was made known in April--a profit of $11.8 million. Its loss in 1975 was $16.4 million.

TRANSPORT 2000 HAS asked the Canadian Transport Commission to reconsider its decisions to allow discontinuance of the Winnipeg-Thunder Bay and Sudbury-Sault Ste. Marie services.

"AMERICA'S MOST SCENIC water trip," the Sidney B.C.-Anacortes, Wash. ferry service, may be abandoned by Washington State. Protestors are asked to write: Sen. Gordon Walgren, Legislature, Olympia WA 98504 and the two Seattle newspapers, The Times at Seattle WA 98111, and the Post-Intelligencer, Seattle WA 98121.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1.00 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads (camera-ready) $25 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 ins.); smaller sizes priced proportionately. Write to: MESSAGE MEDIA, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.



# TRAIN ENERGY EFFICIENCY

by John Schmidt

One of the best selling points for continued development of passenger train service is the energy efficiency of trains compared to autos and jet aircraft. This undoubted asset is paradoxically both undersold and oversold: undersold because not much is written or said about it; oversold because when it is mentioned it tends to be presented as the final solution to the energy crunch of the 1980s. It isn't. The amount of fuel any foreseeable use of trains could save is small in relation to the total U.S. energy requirements. But there is a useful energy-saving role for trains nonetheless.

Rail enthusiasts get discouraged, and the public is misled, by frequent references in the press to studies showing buses considerably more energy-efficient than trains. The best known of these studies, by the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, unintentionally underrates trains by using ridership figures gathered in the last pre-Amtrak years, when many "passenger" trains were largely express and mail--many cars, few passengers. Because these studies relate passenger miles to fuel consumption, trains come off looking worse than they would look today.

A more recent comparison is made by S. David Freeman, one of President Carter's energy advisers and author of a 1973 study for the Twentieth Century Fund, "Energy: The new era." Freeman found that from Boston to New York a half-filled train requires about 2 gallons of fuel per passenger (about the same as a half-filled bus). An average auto, half-filled, uses 7 gallons per passenger, and a half-filled jet aircraft about 10 gallons. These figures translate, respectively, to about 115 passenger miles per gallon for the train, 33 pmpg for the auto, and 23 pmpg for the jet. They should be on the tip of the tongue of everyone interested in promoting rail travel.

But the highway people have an effective and plausible argument: that auto travel is so predominant that putting a large amount of money into railroads would be futile. It can be shown that even if trains carried as many passengers as they labored to carry during World War II, that would account for only about one-tenth of intercity auto travel. This argument, however, overlooks the very high proportion of car travel made up of "trips that would not have been taken if the automobile had not been invented." By definition, these trips would not, or could not, by made by bus, train or air. If fuel is to be available for these trips, in any kind of real energy crisis, it may well be necessary to refrain from driving on trips where train (or bus) could be taken.

The time and money contemplated for finishing the last 12 per cent of the Interstate Highway system would go a long way toward giving Amtrak a 100 billion-passenger-mile capability[1]. If 50 billion of those passenger miles came off the highways and 50 billion from the airways, the fuel saving (extrapolating Freeman's Boston-New York gallon figures) might be on the order of 2.8 billion gallons a year--some 67 million barrels. This is nearly a 3 1/2-day supply of petroleum for all of the nation's needs, or a 12- or 13-day supply for all kinds of freight and passenger transportation[2].

Is that kind of saving worthwhile? The question can be reasonably argued both ways. The answer depends on the availability and price of petroleum or a workable substitute in 1985--something nobody really can predict. Of course, the railroads' real ace in the hole as passenger carriers is their ability to burn any fuel in the form of electricity. In the absence of petroleum, all aircraft are grounded (short of a breakthrough such as cheap, large-scale extraction of liquid hydrogen from the ocean). Highway vehicles

are less dependent on oil than are aircraft only because of the remote possibility of a real breakthrough in storage batteries. But at this point the train appears clearly the best for an energy-short future. The only real question is: can the best be good enough?

[1]The DOT reported to Congress in January that 7 or 8 years and $50 billion would be required. $25 billion would put 100,000 miles of track in first-rate condition (FRA rail classification report, Fall 1976). Another $25 billion would buy 50,000 passenger cars at $500,000 each.

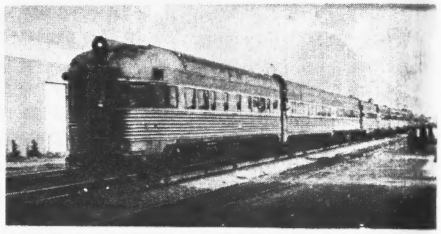
[2]Fifty billion passenger miles by auto, divided by 33 pmpg, equals about 1.515 billion gallons. 50 billion passenger miles by plane, divided by 23 pmpg equals about 2.175 billion gallons. Total: about 3.69 billion gallons--minus 865 million gallons used for trains=100 billion passenger miles divided by 115 pmpg. Net: 2.825 billion gallons, or about 67 million (42-gallon) barrels.

## CARS & CONSISTS

*Transcontinental Steam Excursion, Mesa AZ Apr 23: engines GS-4 4449, tender, UP 12-wheel tender, SDP40F 543; cars 1180 baggage, AFT tool car "Columbia", parlor 3644 "Nathan Hale", open-door baggage 1117, dome coach 9545 "Silver Vision", coaches 5685, 6023, 6021, snackbar lounge 8399, dome coach 9542 "Silver Stream", coaches 3965, 3925, 6024, 6013, 6018, dome observation 9310.

*CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN, trains 773-4, inaugural consist Apr 24: engine 223; cars 1376 Ambag, Amcoach 21144, Amcafe 20202, Amcoaches 21142, 21150.

*Santa Fe Directors Special, Denver-Chicago, at Chillicothe IL Apr 27: engines 5942, 5945, 5943 (FP45s in yellow war bonnet paint); cars steam car 139, 67 "Regal Manor", 51 "Topeka" bus. car, 65 "Regal Lane", 64 "Regal Hunt", 60 ex-SF CHIEF dome lounge, 61 Diner, 68 "Regal Spa", 66 "Regal Lark", 62 diner, 53 "Mountainair" bus. car, 52 "Atchison" bus. car, 50 "Santa Fe" bus. car, 89 Track Inspection car.



Ex-SCL observation was used on Transcontinental Steam Excursion L.A.-Portland. Message Media Photo.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 449, Boston Apr 24: engines (E8s) 310, 283 (striped paint); cars PC 1591, 1407, 8410, 5657, 5658, 2531 "Cardinal", Lehigh Valley observation 353 (owned by Lehigh Black Diamond Ltd, Syracuse.

*SILVER METEOR, train 84, Waldo Apr 17: engines 582, 608; cars 1520, 5470, 4575, 4560, 5665, 8083 "Greenville", 5477, 4416, 4449, 4429, 3314, 8020, 3213 "Nutmeg State", 2621 "Pacific Northwest", 2302 "Humming Bird", 2798 "Toronto Islands", 2784 "Seminole County".

*MONTREALER, train 60, Washington Apr 22: engine 955 (E60); cars 1076, 2608 "Pacific Crest", 2702 "St. Petersburg", 2236 "Magnolia Gardens", 8300, 5801, 5475, 6027, 5649, PC 1594, PC 1582, PC 1588, PC 1586, 1043 mail.

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, San Jose May 2: engines 527 (new paint-returning from steam excursion use), 545, 547; cars 1006, 1500, 4532, 4510, 4495, 4540, 4865, 4886, 4534, 3351, 8034, 2710 "Pine Arroyo", 2654 "Silver Falls", deadhead 2713 "Pine Cavern", private observation "Hulham."

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3, Kansas City May 4: engines 519, 518; cars 1165, 9991, 9922, 9958, 9974, 9984, 9919, 2217 "Indian Pony", 2753 "Palm Leaf", 2701 "Miami" (thru car), 1059, (deadheads) 3957, 21258, 21261, 21260, 20230.



# PROBLEMS OF REVIVING A TRAIN

## A recent history of the movement to restore the Monterey-San Francisco rail service

### by Elmer Lagorio

Late in 1973 two important events affecting transportation on California's scenic Monterey Peninsula were reported by the Monterey newspaper: (1) Bay Rapid Transit, the privately-owned bus system that serviced the area since 1922 had received permission from the state PUC to discontinue bus service on the Peninsula; (2) A citizens committee was formed under the leadership of Edgar Haber of Carmel Valley Golf and Country Club to work for the revival of the DEL MONTE EXPRESS, the ex-Southern Pacific San Francisco-Monterey short distance passenger train that expired with the advent of Amtrak. These two unrelated events went their respective ways, but by 1976-77 were so intertwined that they clashed with each other.

Bay Rapid Transit made its first appearance in Feb 1922 when its Model T Ford buses competed with streetcars operated by the Monterey and Pacific Grove Street Railway. Unable to withstand its formidable rival, the latter firm folded with the last trolley running in July of 1923.

After World War II, with the population explosion of private automobiles and the dramatic increase in freeway construction, patronage of the local bus system dropped significantly. The company's profit and loss statements consistently recorded their last lines in red ink, and management finally petitioned the state in 1972 for permission to cease operations.

Realizing that a transit system was vital in providing transportation to neighboring communities making up the Peninsula, five cities (Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel, Seaside and Del Rey Oaks) joined with Monterey County to subsidize the private bus line until the fall of 1973. With the state approving Bay Rapid's petition for discontinuance of service, the buses last operated under that company's name on Sept 25. The next day, the same buses rolled out for their regular assignments under a new logo: Joint Powers Agency--the public transit organization formed by the five cities.

The dark days of the 1973-74 gasoline shortage spurred residents to gravitate to the bus for shopping, running errands, commuting to the junior college, and reaching recreational and entertainment centers. In March 1974 the agency's name was changed to Monterey Peninsula Transit. With the help of state and federal funds, used buses were purchased from El Paso's transit system, new routes were adopted, and service generally improved. By Sept 1974 a 70% increase in ridership proved that the city bus line could wean motorists from their cars.

In May 1976 new Rohr "Flxible" buses went into operation. Six months later service was extended beyond the Peninsula into Salinas with the route ending at the Amtrak depot, thereby providing a connection with the COAST STARLIGHT. Successive monthly reports showed a steady growth in ridership as Monterey Peninsulans responded to the improved transit system.

As a result, when plans were first discussed back in 1973-74 by the committee to revive the DEL MONTE EXPRESS, the five cities constituting the Joint Powers Agency viewed with suspicion any proposal that might divert public funds from the local bus system. The Pacific Grove mayor stated his reluctance to commit any funds for this project in the absence of any

guarantee from the tourist industry, which, he believed, should underwrite the proposed rail service. In a Jul 30, 1974 editorial, the Monterey Peninsula Herald took a stand against a "new" DEL MONTE EXPRESS, stressing that public disinterest in the train would not be any less today than it was when Southern Pacific was operating it.

Notwithstanding the cool reception from the press and some civic leaders, the DEL MONTE committee--now joined by Santa Clara County--continued negotiations with Amtrak. After months of meetings and tedious work, a break came in Sep 1975 when Governor Brown signed Senate Bill 283 providing $3 million in state funds for restoration of rail service within the state. In succeeding months, the state Department of Transportation joined the group working for the DEL MONTE's return. A financial report indicated that first-year costs would total approximately $1.2 million. It was obvious that Monterey County's share would amount to a pretty penny.

Again, fears arose among certain Monterey Peninsula city governments that funds would be diverted from Monterey Peninsula Transit. The Pacific Grove representative on the Monterey County Transportation Commission went on record in opposing restoration of the DEL MONTE EXPRESS in order to "protect and support on-going public transit operators." When San Francisco Bay Area newspapers and local papers announced in Apr 1976 (as a result of a DEL MONTE committee meeting) the probable resumption of train service by October of that year, the Pacific Grove City Council took the initiative and passed a resolution opposing the train's revival on the grounds that "funds for local transit programs would receive a lower priority." A month later, Carmel's city council passed a similar resolution. Monterey's city council, however, maintained a low profile and took no action, probably realizing that the city--and the new convention center under construction near the SP railroad station--would benefit from the restoration of rail service. (Neither Seaside nor Del Rey Oaks has taken a stand on the matter.)

At a Jun 30, 1976 meeting of the DEL MONTE committee, agreement was reached among its members as to the train's schedule and consist (see RTN, 2nd July 1976, p.15). The remaining hurdle was the preparation of an agreement that would meet with the approval of the counties thru which the train would operate. Some counties balked at the $210,000 assessment as their share of the DEL MONTE's costs, and the committee has since met to determine where expenses could be reduced.

On Mar 2, 1977 Senator Alfred Alquist of San Jose (in Santa Clara County) introduced Senate Bill 429 in the state legislature whereby $967,000 would be allocated by the state "for the restoration of rail passenger service on the corridor formerly served by the DEL MONTE EXPRESS between the City of Monterey and the City and County of San Francisco." A week later, in another editorial, the Monterey Peninsula Herald again failed to endorse the train's proposed revival. "State, federal and local tax monies raised for transit needs here should be spent where they will do the most good--on specific local transit projects."

* * *

On May 3, 1977 the Senate Committee on Public Utilities, Transit and Energy approved Senator Alquist's bill by an 8-1 vote and sent it to the Finance Committee. Thus matters stand at the moment. If the state appropriates its sum and Amtrak subsidizes half of the train's costs, there is still some civic resistance on the Monterey Peninsula to dispersing public funds for this project. Until such fears can be allayed by locating county funds which will not threaten Monterey Peninsula Transit, the status of the DEL MONTE EXPRESS remains unsettled.



# GHOSTS OF AN AMTRAK CHRISTMAS PAST

## by Robert Rynerson

RTN readers are familiar with the inside details of the memorable Christmas present handed rail travelers by railroad restrictions on Amtrak's SDP-40F engines. However, there are many people who were caught in this mess and will blame it on Amtrak. There are longer range implications too. Here is a letter my wife received from a friend:

. . .

"Your Christmas sounded very happy. Ours was too, but as for vacation it was a real hassle and we will never again travel at Christmas if we can help it. The train leaving Portland was late because the train going north was late; there was no dome car (we had counted on that to relieve the boredom and confinement of the train compartment)--just a smoky, dirty lounge car filled with scuzzy-looking people; by mid-afternoon, about 6 hours before L.A. there was no more food (we didn't know this until 7pm, when we went for supper--we did manage to beg a ham sandwich and a 7-Up for Jerald (their 2-yr-old)); we missed the connection in L.A. so Amtrak bused us to San Diego and we arrived at 1:30am. Jerald enjoyed the trip and still talks about it. But Andy and I are not anxious to take another long trip by train."

. . .

The family flew back to Portland from San Diego.

True, there were problems which Amtrak could have prevented. Failure to restock a dining car at Oakland on a delayed train is a typical Amtrak error compounding an error. The absence of the dome car is "one of those things" on a system forced to use obsolete equipment, altho Amtrak's equipment planners seem to be resolving the problem by eliminating domes. All of these things could have been ignored had the train been anywhere near on time. And the train would normally have left Portland on time, not having been dependent on the arrival of power from the south since delivery of the first SDP40F's. Suddenly, Amtrak '77 was booted back to Amtrak '71, with the Menk-induced power shortage. And like the saying about the "want of a nail" that lost the shoe, that lost the horse, etc., the locomotive shortage seemed to bring out the worst in Amtrak's past.

The thing that some railroad officials do not understand is that passengers are people. They are not little plastic figures supplied by Lionel. When some of them get off trips like the one above, they write angry letters. They can be ignored. But some of them do not say anything right away. Andy, the fellow whose family experienced the SDP40F treatment, is responsible for freight shipments in a large Northwest building materials supply firm. How open can his mind remain when railroad sales people call on him? No matter how hard he tries to be objective, that late train snafu is going to be lurking in the back of his head.

While working for the State of Oregon as its rail planner, I found that one of the biggest obstacles in talking about railroads as a serious contender for a bigger share of the pie in freight transportation was the image of ineptness cultivated by the passenger operations of the railroad that served the string of college towns in California and Oregon. The students of the late 1960's who were double-booked, harassed, delayed, scheduled against, and generally made to feel unwelcome by that road are now sitting behind desks in state offices, in big corporations, in consulting firms, and some of them are moving into seats in the legislature. These people might try to be objective, but every so often a little anecdote would slip into their conversation about the time when...

## GETTING IN A NEW TRAIN: The inaugural of the fifth SAN DIEGAN

by Paul Rayton

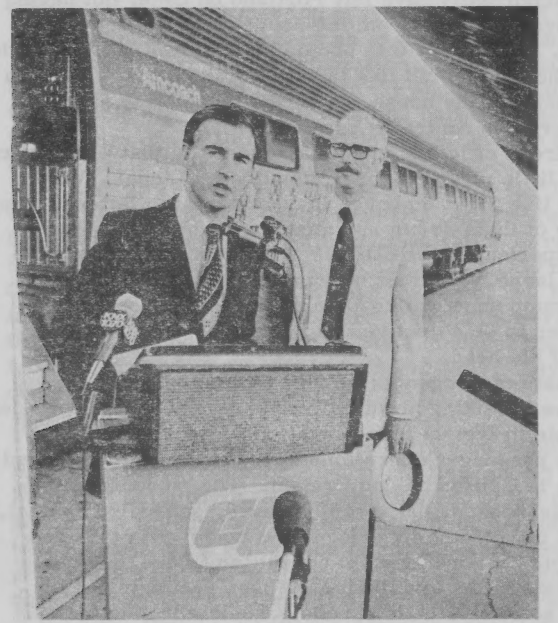
Ceremonies in both San Diego and Los Angeles marked the Apr 24 inaugural of the second state-supported train on the rapidly growing L.A.-San Diego corridor. As the fifth daily round trip, the second CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN, or the CALTRAK II, as CalTrans referred to it, trains 773-4, was launched from San Diego with RTN and a number of VIPs aboard.

Governor Jerry Brown, making his first train-inaugural appearance, along with legislative aide Grey Davis, CalTrans Director Adriana Gianturco, and State Senator James R. Mills (D.-San Diego) were present to speak at the ceremonies and ride the new Amfleet train. Brown told the audience: "Try it. You'll like it. I hope others will try the train. If it expands in popularity, we could conserve a lot of energy. We'll have a few less cars on the road and a little less smog. Those who feel like hopping in their gas guzzlers, I urge them instead to go to the train station and get in a train."

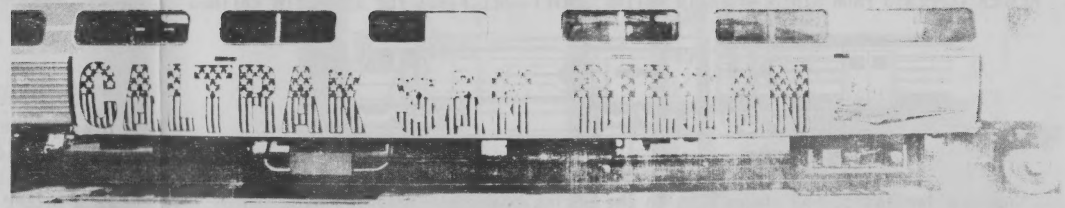
Ms. Gianturco said the "Caltrak" program was still experimental but added that CalTrans was very pleased with the initial results since start of the first such train last September. Sen. Mills, who authored the bill that resulted in the new service, was presented a "Golden Spike" award for his efforts, the presentation made by George Falcon, publisher of Key magazine and VP of Citizens for Rail California.

Amtrak was represented by Western Region VP Neal Owen and Public Affairs man Art Lloyd. Good press coverage was received at both ends of the run.

Delayed a bit by the speeches, the train left San Diego 6min late at 9:36am, and arrived exactly on time in L.A. at 12:10pm (for consist, see p. 8). At all stops, regular passengers boarded. The train was moderately well-patronized after only 3 days of newspaper ads announcing the new schedules. No printed timetables were in the stations, but arrival and departure boards had been updated.



(Left:) Gov. Brown and Sen. Mills face the microphones at the Los Angeles ceremony. (Below:) Neal Owen, Brown, Sen. Mills, and Adriana Gianturco at L.A. ceremony.



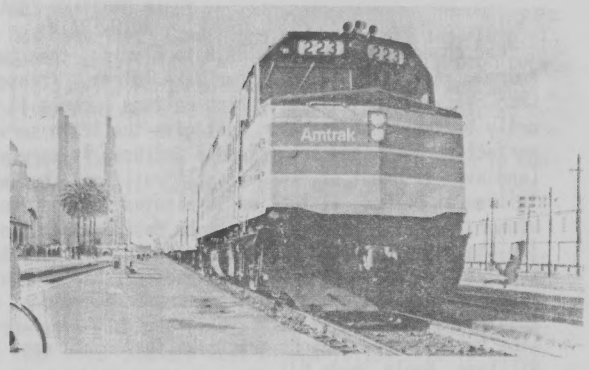

(Above:) A press car, Amcoach 21150, was adorned with a red, white and blue CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN banner.

(Right, top:) Gov. Brown is interviewed by TV newsmen at his Amcoach seat on the inaugural run. Beside him is CalTrans Director Gianturco. Brown rode San Diego-L.A., returning from a visit to Mexico.

(Right, middle:) Sen. Mills is presented with a Golden Spike award at San Diego.

(Right, lower:) The inaugural train, with F40 engine 223 in front, prepares to leave San Diego on Apr 24.

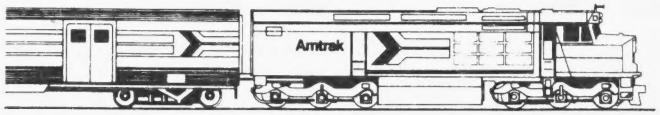
The new run leaves San Diego at 9:30am for a 2hr, 40min dash to Los Angeles. It departs L.A. at 1:30pm and arrives San Diego at 4:05. The trains make all regular stops except San Clemente.




Photos by Paul Rayton.

# THE TRAIN RIDES OF AMTRAK'S SIXTH YEAR

READER COMMENTS FROM RTN'S 4th TRAIN RATING SURVEY--SEE FIRST FEB ISSUE FOR RATINGS




## NORTH COAST HIAWATHA

"Scenery fantastic. No comparison to the EMPIRE BUILDER's flat plains. Three coaches west of Minneapolis well-filled. Domes appreciated by all--actually had standees in the dome aisle to view scenery. Regional northern pike delicious, and good diner service too. Lounge attendant J. Johnson very jolly and seemed to enjoy serving with a smile. Nice crew, fantastic mountain scenery, clean domes, tremendously friendly and happy fellow riders--this was one fantastic train trip. I recommend this train!" (Alan Miller, Palo Alto CA).

"The most delightful service I've ever had on Amtrak. All the crew were college students who had both charm and concern for the customer. What a contrast to the sullen service I have received on the SF ZEPHYR, for instance!" (J. Eigenbrodt, Greencastle IN).

"Our sleeping car porter did everything but grant us three wishes. Every time we saw him he was asking us if there was anything he could do and how was our trip so far" (H. Martin Swan, St. Paul MN).

"Best dining car steward and crew I have encountered in years. Cars clean and all in very good shape except one sleeper--mine, unfortunately--an early refurbish job with light upholstery which was very soiled. Two dome coaches and an ex-DZ dome lounge made for a very enjoyable trip" (L. Stewart, Chicago IL).

"One of the most enjoyable trips I've ever made in the U.S. or elsewhere. This is partly due to the excellent scenery, partly to excellent condition of equipment, but primarily to the wonderful train and on-board service crews. Dining car crew, under the most capable leadership of Steward R. Paulson, consisted of young, enthusiastic people" (Walter E. Zullig Jr., Larchmont NY).

"Meal service and food excellent. Had a young dining car crew with a steward who still announced dinner with chimes. The Northern Pike Amandine was done to a turn and couldn't have beenbeaten in any gourmet restaurant" (A. Bianchi, Chicago).

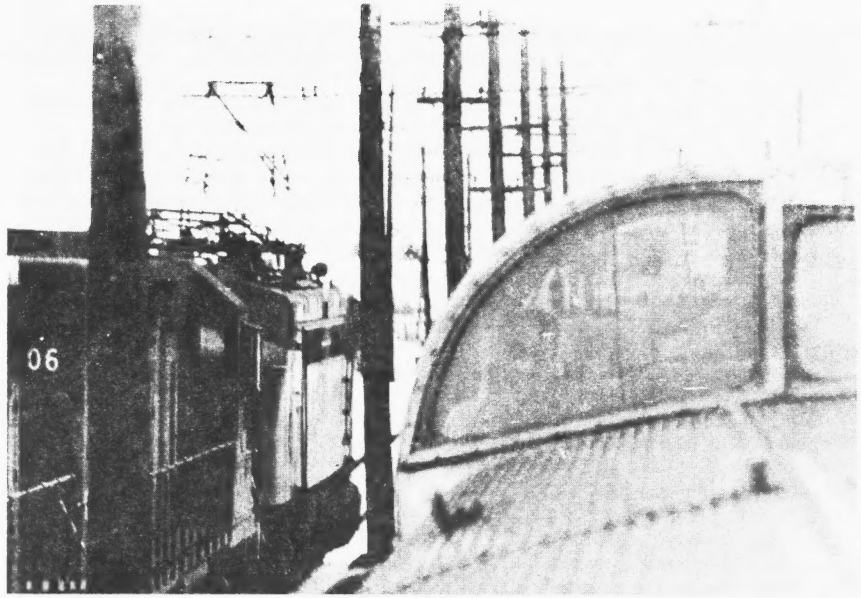
"I was surprised at the amount of 72mph travel. It gives a good feeling of getting over the road, of getting somewhere. But hard to sleep at times because of rough track" (Pete May, Goldendale WA).

"Really a great train. Always seems to have Amtrak's best of everything. Tops in every way" (Wilbert Felgenhauer, Steward IL).

## AUTO-TRAIN

"Had chance to ride AUTO-TRAIN to Florida, then turn right around and return on Amtrak. All in all, I'd rather take Amtrak. I think A-T, along with the SOUTHERN CRESCENT, gets artificially high ratings because it is different, but not necessarily better, than Amtrak. Must give the train service personnel high, but not perfect marks. They are friendly and usually very willing to please the passenger (and even tolerant of "know-it-all" railfans), but when my car had an electrical failure at 8:30pm, it took me 15 minutes to find the car hostess to report it. Dinner in the diner left much to be desired--service very slow (almost 1½ hours for the meal) with no apparent cause, and the meal seemed more on par with Amcafe than with dining car fare. Trip had its share of mechanical problems. Both diesels failed at Savannah and the borrowed SCL diesel couldn't maintain schedule. About 3½ hours late overall. Cars are nice--well-refurbished and in good condition but with one serious drawback: inadequate rest room facilities" (G. Gerrish Williams, Maple Shade NJ).






The NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, Amtrak's top-rated train, in early Mar 1974 detoured over formerly-electrified Milwaukee Road trackage between Missoula & Deer Lodge. No. 10's dome riders (above) watched "Little Joe" electric engines roll by with freights at Bearmouth, Montana. Photo by Gil Hulin.

## CN CAVALIER

"Very clean, nicely run train. Crews very well trained" (H. Hanrahan, Kansas City).

"CN does an outstanding job. Train is spotless, crew (except for snack attendant) is courteous, and schedule is punctual. This train is intended to take its time between Montreal and Toronto; therefore its scheduling and routing are quite desirable. For travelers in a hurry, there are the daylight Turbo runs" (J. Kaplan, New York NY).

"Berth accommodations excellent" (Angela Garcia, Chicago IL).

"The CAVALIER goes from A to B on time, and its equipment works" (Don Porter, Lexington KY).

"Food car open all night with a wide selection of food" (John Holst, Milwaukee WI).

"Sleeping car attendant very courteous and helpful. Uppers and lowers good value for the money and are comfortable. Slept very well" (Todd Nicholson, Marion IN).

## JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

"One of the worst rides I've had recently. Conductors very friendly and route over C&O a treat, but the schedule is unbelievably slow, the cars in very poor condition, and the maintenance terrible. The rest rooms were a disgrace. Food service personnel rude. No dome for our run, with no excuse given" (Russ Sklenicka, Gainesville FL).

"Needs promotion and better station facilities in Indiana. Slumbercoaches in consist would be desirable. Dining crew surly. Chessie train crew very good" (Todd Nicholson, Marion IN).

"Enjoyed dome in MOUNTAINEER half of consist from boarding in Muncie until well into Kentucky. Descent into Cincinnati from the west via C&O at night is spectacular. Dome to Newport News was sorely missed next morning in the Virginia mountains" (C. M. Koch, Reston VA).

"I pulled the sink out from the wall in the roomette only to have the whole sink come out. Not fold down, just come out. Scenery west of Charlottesville is great

but in the dark. Diner from (pre-Amfleet) MOUNTAINEER was a cheapy snack bar with no air conditioning. I call that Amtacky. Indiana is tedious. Washington Union Station is a mess. How long, oh Lord, how long?" (Reader, Portland OR).

"The train looked as tho a hurricane had just been thru it. The coaches were jammed and there was no lounge space" (D. Vaccaro, Great Neck NY).

"Train 3 hours late into Clifton Forge but 5 passengers boarded anyway. Good comments from passengers about appearance, but a great deal of grumbling because diner would not serve breakfast to anyone until 2 tours groups were fed--very rude about it too" (Zane G. Katsikis, Ithaca NY).

SOUTHWEST LIMITED

"I was very impressed. Every car was in fine condition and a great crew was aboard. We were early everywhere west of Raton. The dome was very nice with the swivel chairs upstairs. Every inch of the dome car was designed well" (D. Vaccaro, Great Neck NY).

"Could write a book about this trip. In spite of problems, it was an enjoyable and sometimes dramatic trip. A man died somewhere in Illinois and had to be removed at La Plata MO; a woman had a heart attack in New Mexico; and a generator shaft broke in the boondocks east of Gallup and had to be repaired. All of this put us into Flagstaff an hour late. But we met some marvelous people and saw some beautiful scenery. And as we watched the setting sun turn the Sandia Mountains red, then pink, and then purple, we decided this was the only really sensible way to travel across the country" (James C. Clark, Galena IL).

"All train crewmen were excellent; porter on our car was drunk at LAUPT--not somewhat, but paralyzed. Rear brakeman was trying hard to be helpful, and was. Porter was removed by Amtrak depot security and we left with no porter. Crew and porter from next car covered admirably. Dome lounge in excellent shape, but attendant did nothing in 24 hours to tidy or clean up the car. Station agent at Lamar was right at the foot of the steps of our sleeper, called us by name and assisted us with our luggage; also called our motel for courtesy car to pick us up" (H. W. Patrick, Alhambra CA).

"Train very crowded. Dining car crew totally inept and very disorganized. Food mediocre. Lounge car attendant spent little time cleaning his car and by the last morning the car looked like a rolling garbage dump" (R. Strein, Santa Fe NM).

"Has to get the award for the finest train. Had roomette from L.A. to Chicago and what a great porter I had! He went out of his way to give his patrons a most pleasant journey. It seemed as tho every time I left my room and returned there would be clean, fresh towels and wash cloth for me. Car was spotless ("Palm Path"). Dining car crew was super with food like a high class restaurant but much more reasonable. The Pleasure Dome was a smooth beauty with service to match. The SWL was once again the great SUPER CHIEF that I surely hated to get off at Chicago and only wished that I had the time to go right back on this great train to L.A." (Wilbert Felgenhauer, Steward IL).

"Track was poor. Had to hang on for dear life in roomette to sleep. Diner rocked as if it were derailed" (Patrick Ellyson, Downey CA).

"Dining service was mediocre--steward sullen and unfriendly, waiters acted as tho they were running a production line" (R.B. Biddulph, Novelty OH).

"Diner understaffed for the large crowd. Staff extremely rude and very slow, but there were reasons for this. The hi-level diner rode like a P.T. Boat in heavy seas and its air conditioning was quite marginal. The food elevators were not functioning, so the men had to carry the food up the stairs. One cook quit the job en route, so working conditions downstairs must have been just as bad as upstairs. Each time I take this train the stations are a little dirtier, there are fewer redcaps, and there are fewer people to sell tickets. I guess that's progress" (Amtrak employee, Los Angeles).



# Mixed Train of Thoughts

OUR COVER PICTURE was already printed before we realized that it's the second time this year we've shown engine 229 on the cover of RTN--the first time being the 1st Jan issue, which depicted the Gil Reid painting on this year's Amtrak calendar. Our present illustration comes from a slide of the inaugural run of the Amfleet SAN JOAQUIN, and shows two F40s in front of some Amfleet cars.....

RIDERSHIP HAS LEAPED on the Turbolized ADIRONDACK, Amtrak announced May 6. The reasons are the big roundtrip fare promotion, the new Turbo equipment, ads, and hotel package plans. Ridership in April was 331% more than April 1976's. On May 1 Amtrak carried 474 people on the ADIRONDACK, compared to 98 on May 1, 1976. Amtrak has been running two sections of the train on weekends when equipment was available. The normal 5-car Turbo set holds only 265, but Amtrak has run 6-car trains many days. Second sections will run (northbound on Fridays, south on Sundays) at least thru May 29..... FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION study just released read like an Amtrak press release when it appeared in the Washington DC press and on the air May 6: during the last 7 years the train's portion of NY-Washington ridership increased from 27% to 41%. Wilbert Barger, Manager of Departure Services at National Airport said: "We're well aware that we're in competition with that train".....

* * *

AMTRAK WILL INCREASE fares an average of 3% on Jun 1, the corporation announced May 1. Fixed surcharges ranging from 25¢ to $1 per ticket will be added, with the increases being caused by inflation and increased operating costs. The surcharge is being added to help meet the increased costs resulting from the severe winter weather, Amtrak said. Routes getting no increases are: New Haven-Springfield; NY-Princeton Junction; Phila-Harrisburg. On other routes the percentage increase will be coupled with excursion discounts--as on NY-Florida and Chicago-Florida. The ADIRONDACK and the RILEY will get mostly 5% increases.....

AMTRAK ON-BOARD SERVICES has a new director--an ex-Fred Harvey man, H. Rex Holland. Prior to joining Amtrak, Holland was a private consultant to the food industry, and from 1973-76 was director of dining service for Eastern Airlines; from 1970-73 he was VP-catering services for Pan American World Airways.....

* * *

AMTRAK CUISINE TIP from the top: a passenger wrote to Amtrak complaining about microwave-cooked hamburgers on Amfleet trains. A high Amtrak source replied that he didn't like them either, and preferred to order the "Great American Hero," which is sort of a submarine sandwich..... NARP'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY meeting in Washington in April saw a resolution passed that the Amtrak system be expanded during the next decade. A map showing proposed new routes was issued. We will try to present more on this next issue. NARP also called for more rehabilitation of track and roadbed, larger capital appropriations for Amtrak, changed Amtrak cost accounting methods so the true costs of operating each train can be known, and improved Amtrak efficiency with local promotion handled on a regional basis. NARP commended Amtrak for renovating older cars and asked that all restorable cars be done over; for its decision not to move St. Louis station outside the downtown, and urged Amtrak to keep stations downtown wherever possible. Called upon the government to help the needs of the tourism industry in the coming energy shortage by giving Amtrak adequate support..... KEY OHIO OFFICIALS are planning to ride the NATIONAL LIMITED between Columbus and Dayton on May 16, along with the news media, the publicity run being arranged by OARP. Some believe that the move will be a protest of Amtrak's decision to keep the RILEY on its "detour" route for the next two years..... AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT says that the contest to name Amtrak's bi-level cars has been won with the winning name "Superliner"...

AMTRAK SPRING TIMETABLES now include the following: forms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14A, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, and 106, according to Alan Follett. Form 14A covers the SHENANDOAH and BLUE RIDGE only. Form 14 and the nationwide timetable (form A) are being delayed while changes are being made on some Eastern routes. (Many thanks to the several readers who have sent us timetables; they are very hard to obtain in this area, and Amtrak's own mailing is very slow).....

NEW STATION PLANS: Amtrak has recently approved funding for a new Miami station ($2 million); a new Canton OH station; refurbishment and repair of the North Philadelphia station; abandoned plans for a new St. Louis station away from downtown and instead decided to move into the former Railway Express Agency building at 18th St. & Clark Ave, near the existing Union Station; and will re-open the Merced CA station from May 16 thru Sep 15..... TEN MORE F40 locomotives will be purchased by Amtrak, its Board of Directors agreed Apr 22, at a cost of about $7 million, to add to the 30 already purchased from General Motors. The F40s have a top speed of 103mph..

* * *

CARTER'S GASOLINE TAX "appears doomed," concludes the Wall Street Journal (May 6), altho its death may help get the "gas-guzzling" car tax passed. The gasoline tax was too small to be effective anyway, concluded the Journal's Les Gapay (May 3) and other observers, including Calif. Senator Hayakawa, who said that it would have to be about 50¢ a gallon to have any impact on car usage..... THOSE BURLINGTON ZEPHYR consistsrecently sold to the Saudi Arabian government, reported here earlier, are now in operation in that country, reports the NY Times (May 1). They run on a 350 mile route between Dammam on the Persian Gulf and the capital, Riyadh. Conditions restrict their speed to 60mph--sandstorms and temperature extremes. The unscenic trip takes about 7 hours and costs $4.50. The 21 cars form 3 trainsets of two coaches, two first class sleepers, diner-observation, and baggage car with generator for the electrically-equipped cars. The cars have been refurbished, with microwave ovens instead of stoves in the diners..... THE AMERICAN PRESS has been kept largely in the dark about the SDP40F engine crisis that began last winter, but Railway Gazette International (Mar) reports the problem in scarcely-masked terms of shock: the "motive power crisis" serves to "make nonsense of published schedules." Amtrak's "most powerful and modern units are virtually out of action." The magazine, published in England, said that the problem is that "US manufacturers are geared to the mass production of very heavy freight locomotives which are just not suitable for high-speed passenger work." The magazine reported that Amtrak "wants to buy" two GM AMT-125 diesels (see RTN, First Apr 1976). The Clearance Card reports that SDP40F tests show the engines develop vertical oscillations, not lateral ones, on bad track; and that the BN track was found to be in much worse shape than believed. Another report says that no problems with the SDP40Fs have been found yet. Says the Clearance Card: "Apparently only the Santa Fe and Union Pacific have track that is of high enough quality (class 5 to class 6) to disregard curve restrictions and buffer cars."..... THE READER'S DIGEST article discussed here last issue has been reprinted in the May edition of Russell's Bus Guide--2½ pages worth. It begins on the inside rear cover, which is usually reserved for a message from Greyhound. A reader remarks, "no mention is made of who paid for this, but it is obvious that Greyhound did"..... THE SAN JOAQUIN had a 55.2% ridership increase in April, compared to Apr 1976, with 9,745 passengers riding last month. The SAN DIEGANS rose 65.9% in ridership the same month, increasing to 63,341 souls--the largest number ever carried in one month on the line between California's two most populous cities. At the same time, the Portland-Seattle corridor trains rose 13.1%. The COAST STARLIGHT was up 21%.....

* * *

NEW MIAMI STATION will be built by Orlando Mendez Inc. at NW 37th Ave. & 82nd St. Total cost will be $5.7 million, with $2 million just approved for the structure itself. $1.25 goes to SCL for land, track, etc., and $2.45 million for outside work.....



JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY derailed eastbound near Frazier, West Virginia, on Apr 7 at 7:55am. There were no injuries among the 140 passengers, who were bused on from Frazier. The northbound SILVER METEOR on Apr 28 was sideswiped by a ConRail freight train north of Baltimore, in Middle River. A freight car was believed to have buckled and then derailed, scraping the side of the Amtrak loco and first 4 cars. The damaged cars and loco were removed and a new engine substituted in a move that delayed the train only slightly. There were no injuries reported.....

YEAR OF MISHAPS--that's what 1977 has been so far. We've had perhaps the biggest oil spill yet, in the North Sea. The 577 persons killed in the Mar 27 on-the-ground collision of two jumbo jets in the Canary Islands was the biggest air disaster in history, and outweighs the greatest railway disaster of all time: 543 killed in a derailment at Modane, France, on Dec 12, 1917. The worst U.S. rail wreck was at Nashville TN on Jul 9, 1918, when 101 died. A U.S. political cartoon following the jet disaster pictured the specter of death at the crash scene, chanting "Bigger and better...bigger and better...".....

TEXAS OFFICIAL HIGHWAY map for 1977-8 shows an Amtrak train on its color cover, along with cars and buses on an 8-lane freeway. The train is running on a single track line in the freeway median. Does anyone know the location of this scene?--perhaps Austin or San Antonio?.....

OUR LATEST REPORT on the Philadelphia transit strike had it still unsettled as of Apr 28.....

NARP HAS SUGGESTED to President Carter eleven names for possible appointment to the Amtrak Board. Carter will be able to appoint 7 persons by Jul 19. Those named are: Charles A. Dunn III, Raymond E. Hannon, Ralph Kerchum, Henry Luce III, Anthony Haswell, M. D. Monaghan, Charles Montooth, Ronald C. Sheck, Thomas C. Southerland, James M. S. Ullman, and Robert G. Wickens--most of them RTN readers.....

A RECENT IDEA emanating from Washington concerning the restoration of the DEL MONTE is the possibility of making it an extension of the forthcoming Sacramento-Oakland train; thus it would run Sacto-Oakland-San Jose-Monterey.....

SENATOR JAMES MILLS is urging the retention of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway line, which SP wants to abandon after its damage by a hurricane. Abandonment would leave Tijuana, Mexico without a rail connection with the U.S. Mills is asking the ICC to reject theabandonment petition. There is some indication that Santa Fe might be persuaded to take over the line. In other California/Mexico border news, a rail mass transit study will be made of the route from University City to the Mexican border, and from El Cajon CA to Interstate 5..... A RECENT CARTOON by Herblock pictures an aging steam locomotive being loaded up with coal, with the caption "born again"--a reference to Pres. Carter's emphasis on coal to fill in U.S. energy needs..... BUSINESS WEEK MAGAZINE, a perennial anti-Amtrak subsidy publication, has yet another article (May 2) on "Amtrak's $2 billion run into the red." The same old line familiar to RTN readers is heard, and the article ends with a quote from Greyhound's Kerrigan: "If they want to play with trains, O.K. Just make the passenger pay his way." And will the bus passenger pay for the highways too out of his ticket?..... JAPAN IS TESTING a 300mph mag-lev train..

AMTRAK WAS HONORED early in May in the Discover America Awards Program of the U.S. travel industry for its film highlighting the USA Rail Pass. The film has been translated into five languages and is available to all domestic travel agents. It emphasizes the new equipment on Amtrak lines, and the different cities to which Amtrak runs..... ABOUT SIX WEEKS from now, all the electrified lines of the E-L will be temporarily de-electrified for a one-year period so conversion to new 25,000 volt AC can be done and catenary strung. Service will be substituted by NJ DOT Push-Pull trains and U34CH engines, plus ex-PRR and Santa Fe coaches now being refurbished, along with ex-E-L E8s and passenger GP7's.....

WHEN THE ADIRONDACK goes Amfleet in October, a report says that a pair of Turbos will be placed in service as a Grand Central (NY) to Boston train, something that hasn't run since the 1971 Amtrak takeover..... GRAND CENTRAL STATION was the scene of another rally, at noon on Apr 21, in support of the case to save the station from Penn Central's demonic plans. Jacqueline Onassis , Mayor Beame and other celebrities were again present. The case was to go to the court Apr 27...

STARTING JULY 15, according to a reliable report, Amtrak's P30CH engines will be transferred to the EMPIRE BUILDER and NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, to allow a return to full-speed operation on the BN. However, the schedules are frozen at their slower speeds until the end of October. Until bi-level cars are ready for these trains, the P30s will operate with steam cars. NORTH COAST HI has ocasionally still been late, even with its 7-hour longer schedule, at Missoula. On May 1 the train was ½-hour late westbound at Missoula. And the COAST STARLIGHT has been found by us to be ½-hour and even much more late at Oakland and San Luis southbound following the schedule lengthening..... A NEW BOOK available is: "The Proceedings of the Conference on Rail Passenger Renaissance for California", held at San Diego in May 1976. Order from: Institute of Transportation Studies, 416 McLaughlin Hall (Att: James Ramsey), University of Calif., Berkeley CA 94720. Price $7.50 plus 50¢ handling (plus tax in Cal.) for the 463-p. paperback. Graphics are worse than RTN, but the content interesting--including contributions by Harold Graham, Anthony Haswell, James Mills, and others..... "COLUMBIA RIVER LIMITED" was the name expected for the forthcoming Portland-Salt Lake train, but it was changed to "PIONEER" at the request of local officials..... PRESIDENT CARTER NOMINATED John Sullivan, a former classmate, for the post of Federal Railroad Administrator. And Carter has proclaimed the week of May 15 as National Transportation Week..... AT SECRETARY ADAMS' "town meeting" in San Jose Apr 21 he told the audience "We have to look ahead...to the time when our transportation choices will be determined more by the realities of land use, energy considerations and environmental circumstances than by the factors of economics, convenience or personal preference"..... A WOMAN ESCAPED injury in Prosser WA when an Amtrak train hit her car at a crossing at 8:29am on Apr 14..... A PLAN TO extend the SAN DIEGAN line south to San Ysidro in the future is being considered.....

# Rate the Trains

## ANNOUNCING RTN'S FIFTH READER RATING SURVEY

Readers are invited to submit their ratings and comments on North American regularly scheduled passenger trains (not commuter) ridden between Jan 1 & Jun 30, 1977.

On the opposite page is a form for submitting ratings. You need not use the form--just write on a postcard or sheet of paper using your own format if you wish.

**INSTRUCTIONS: Rate as many trains as you wish, but only those you have personally ridden this year. Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K) below:**

**(A) Your impression of overall quality of service, taking all into account; (B) On-board personnel's service (except food-lounge personnel); (C) Food & lounge crew's service; (D) Food quality; (E) Car condition (cleanliness, repair, etc.); (F) Desirability of route it follows; (G) Station services; (H) Track condition; (I) Desirability of train's schedule; (J) Train promotion; (K) Type of cars used.**

**For your ratings, use the 9-point scale shown below. Please keep ratings separate from any other correspondence (on separate sheet, not separate envelope).**

1 —— 2 —— 3 —— 4 —— 5 —— 6 —— 7 —— 8 —— 9

Extremely poor ▲ Average, acceptable ▲ Extremely good

SEND YOUR RATINGS TO: Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!



RTN'S TRAIN RATING FORM

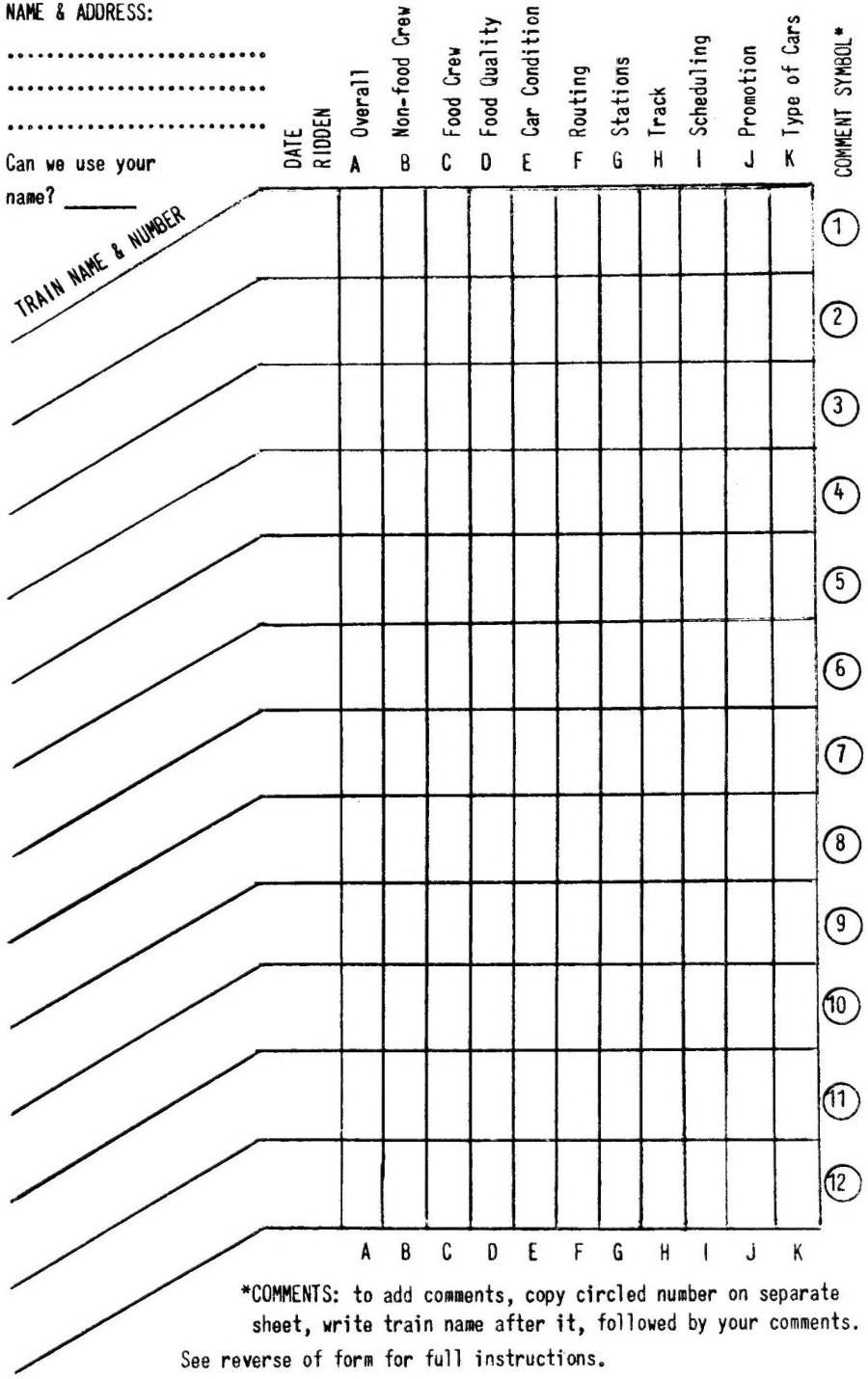
NAME & ADDRESS:

.....

.....

.....

Can we use your name? _____




*COMMENTS: to add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

See reverse of form for full instructions.

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FREE MAP - OREGON AMTRAK ROUTES PLUS HWY & PARK INFO! WRITE: TRAVEL INFO, OreDOT, SALEM, OR 97310.

RAILROADIANA EVENT OF THE SPRING: Spectacular buy/sell Railroadiana Flea Market sponsored by National Association of Timetable Collectors. Saturday May 21, 1977 Geo. Washington Motor Lodge US #1 at Pennsylvania Turnpike, Trevose PA, 1 mile N of Philadelphia, 9am-5pm. Tables available $9 ea, no limit. You can't miss this fantastic event. Make checks to: Tom Coval, 21 E Robin Rd, Holland PA 18966.

Tired of calculating MPH? Rail Speed-O-Graph gives instant MPH based on mileposts. Both sides of 4x9 card. Speeds from 30 to 120mph. Keep several handy. 5 for $1, or $2/dozen. Dan Yaeger, 2239 Ferncliff, St. Louis MO 63122.

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, Pullman, stationery, rules, metal items from 25 railroads. Long stamped envelope for list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. (Will buy large and small railroad collections.)

20th Century Hobbies, 1034 College Ave, Wheaton IL 60187. 312-682-4460. HO, N & O scale and accessories. Railroadiana also available.

CANADIAN NATIONAL CHINA: Largest selection ever offered in the U.S.A.: BONAVENTURE, WINDSOR, QUETICO, RUPERT, MARITIME, QUEEN ELIZABETH, SPAGHETTI Also, UNION PACIFIC CHINA and PAPER GOODS. Send 25¢ for catalog and price list. "THE PRIVATE CAR LIMITED," Third and "A" Streets, Belleville, Illinois 62220.

## RAIL FANTRIPS

May 21: Amtrak L.A.-Oceanside & return, several interesting stops; $25.90. Info: Pacific RR Society, Box 70, East Irvine, CA 92650. Lv L.A. 8am.

Jun 18: Edaville RR 8th Annual Railfan's Day; Flea Market, Model Show, steam & diesel operations; off Route 58, South Carver, Mass. Info: Edaville RR, South Carver MA 02366; 617-866-4526.

May 14: BN yard tour, Denver, meet 8:30am Union Station, free. Write for reservation: Intermountain Chapter, Psgr Dept, Box 5181 Terminal Annex, Denver 80217.

Jun 19-25: Midwestern railfan tour incl. lake yacht tour & RR museums; $379 ea. double. NRHS, Intermountain Chap, Box 5181 Terminal Annex, Denver CO 80217.

One special Fantrips listing is free, subject to our editing. Send full info to: Rail Travel News, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.


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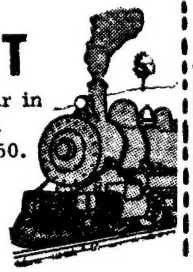

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LETTERS (continued from page 2)

cal implications. These errors, however, can be charged directly to the former Nixon Administration who had no desire whatsoever to promote Rail Passenger Service or Amtrak. The whole purpose of Amtrak was a fraud and was only designed to "bail out" the nation's railroads from the atrocious image they themselves created.

...Much press is given to the "huge" amount of Federal monies Amtrak is receiving. Very few ever mention the fact that the railroads' tax contribution to the Federal Treasury has increased nearly 500 million dollars during the first six years of Amtrak. Their net income has increased as a result of not being able to charge off the former passenger losses of nearly 500 million per year, prior to 1971. This is just the first of many facts the Selby article conveniently overlooked. Another concerns the theory that all long distance travel should be by airlines. Many people can't for physical and mental reasons fly. Also, were it not for direct and hidden subsidies airlines receive from the Federal Treasury, how much would the air fare be from Chicago to Miami, for example? No mention is made of this or any of the Federal aid all forms of public transportation receive.

...I hope you permit a rebuttal article.

James A. Miller
Topeka, Kansas

Some of the letters (last issue) in response to my article on the ADIRONDACK raise a disturbing point. There is a tendency to label people who appreciate amenities and high-quality on-board service on long distance trains as "railfans." I am not sure what this term means, but it apparently is intended to be derogatory. I do not care whether trains are pulled by PA locomotives; nor does the age of the equipment interest me. I specifically stated that one option is "to acquire new equipment capable of providing the amenities offered on the D&H ADIRONDACK." In Europe, businessmen ride TEE trains because they offer full dining and lounge service, and comfortable seats widely spaced. Would anybody pejoratively call these travelers "railfans"? Of course not; and removing these amenities would be unthinkable. So why must those of us who would like to enjoy these services in this country be accused of "nostalgia" or "preventing progress"?

I also pay income taxes to the state of New York. At least with the D&H ADIRONDACK I received something for my money. The magnitude of losses is directly attributable to the lack of promotion. Ridership on the Turbo is up because it is advertised and offers a bargain fare; why couldn't such promotion have been offered previously?... I am no less enthusiastic than Mr. Walker about Turbos and Amfleet. They are excellent for the short trips for which they were designed. But they do not belong on long distance routes. They are simply incapable of offering the quality of service provided by the D&H, and the mere fact that they are new cannot compensate for the elimination of amenities.

Stephen Linde
New York, New York

You had better believe the station in Williamson WV was under water (RTN, 2nd Mar issue). It got 7 feet deep in the building, ruining practically everything, including, I'm sorry to say, a year's stack of RTNs. What a mess! Slimy black mud EVERYWHERE! Most of the mud is out now, but the mud has turned to dust, making a thorough cleanup next to impossible. Rail service resumed with trains leaving Norfolk and Chicago Apr 13. And one note of interest: Amtrak brought in two sleepers on the rear of #54 the morning of Apr 18 to serve as a "hotel" for N&W crews while the regular place, the Mountaineer Hotel, pulls itself back together. The sleepers were 2254 "Star Scene" & 2262 "Placid Haven", running behind engine 702 and cars 20029, 21810, and 1354.

Garland Harper
Williamson, West Virginia

WATCH THESE PAGES for announcement of the long-delayed appearance of RTN's first Rail Travel Yearbook.